

## **AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 17, 2005 MEETING**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mike Sullivan, Dave Wallace, Bob Sutton, Everett Stuart, Kevin Nelson, Jim Opaluch

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Judy Bailey, Jason Pezzullo

**STAFF PRESENT:** Lis Peterman, DEM/Agriculture  
Ken Ayars, DEM/Agriculture

#### **GUESTS:**

The meeting began at 5:05 pm at USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick.

Kevin Nelson made a motion, seconded by Jim Opaluch, to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2005 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Everett Stuart, to maintain the current slate of Officers for 2005 (Mike Sullivan – Chair, Judy Bailey – Vice Chair). The motion passed unanimously.

The Cousineau Farm, Richmond was reviewed and discussed by the Commission. The application will be referred to the Richmond Land Trust, and additional information obtained regarding an abutting parcel of open space of approximately 45 acres. The farm will be discussed again at the March meeting.

The Commission discussed farms in negotiation:

Green, N. Smithfield – Purchase and sale agreement signed, proceeding with survey, title etc.

Lebreaux, Tiverton – Undergoing appraisal by the Nature Conservancy.

Richmond, L. Compton – No recent discussions with family. Commission has agreed to continue negotiations under the proposed conservation plan, with plan details to be refined in concert with DEM and The Nature Conservancy.

Manfredi, Westerly – The Weekapaug Foundation for Conservation will take the lead on discussions with family. Commission to allocate \$250,000.

Escobar, Portsmouth - Appraisal recently received, reviewed and approved by DEM. Commission has approved allocation of \$500,000, and USDA approximately \$900,000. The Aquidneck Island Land Trust is in the process of raising additional funds.

Salisbury, Scituate – Appraisal being updated to include an additional 21 acres of woodland, per request of Salisbury.

Knight, Scituate - Bob Sutton and Ken Ayars recently met with Lynn and Brian Knight to review the appraisal and begin negotiations. The Knights subsequently approved an offer of the appraised value of 2.2 million for development rights to the farm (approximately 85 acres). After discussion, Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Kevin Nelson, to authorize the Chair to sign a purchase and sale agreement, contingent upon the designated level of funding being raised. The motion passed unanimously. The Commission previously authorized a commitment of \$500,000 and has received a grant from USDA for \$350,000. The Nature Conservancy will participate in funding the project, and there will be discussions with the Town of Scituate in this regard.

Panciera, Hopkinton – Purchase and sale agreement signed, survey complete. Ken Panciera wants to cut out one house before closing, and Lisa Primiano, DEM and Ken Panciera recently went before the Hopkinton Planning Board in this regard. The Planning Board issued an approval contingent upon obtaining a wetlands permit from DEM, which when issued is the final step prior to closing.

Tuckahoe Turf, Richmond – Application approved by Commission at the January, 2005 meeting. A meeting was recently held with Steve Donahue, Tuckahoe Turf, DEM, the Water Resources Board (WRB) and Nature Conservancy to coordinate regarding funding the project, and discuss in particular the issue of WRB proposed public water supply wells on the property in relation to farm usage of ground and surface waters for irrigation. It was agreed that the WRB will look into a separate easement on the parcel(s) of the farm where the Board has interest in placing wells for public water supply, to avoid a conflict with the development rights easement.

Cepi, Neale and Dutra Farms, Jamestown – All three undergoing appraisal. Ken Ayars spoke to the appraiser from First Pioneer who will likely complete appraisals within 30 days. Neale will also be considered for USDA Grassland Reserve Program funding.

L. Peckham, and Hibbad, Tiverton – Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Everett Stuart to appraise the farms. The motion passed unanimously.

Smith, Tiverton – Commission reviewed a letter from Eric and Catherine Watne, who seek to purchase the Smith farm contingent and in collaboration with the offer by the Tiverton Land Trust and Commission to purchase the development rights to the farm for \$100,000 (each contributing \$50,000). There was discussion as to the size of the farm and value in relation to the offer. After discussion, Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Jim Opaluch, to maintain the Commission's commitment of up to \$50,000 to match funds designated by the Tiverton Land Trust. The motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion of the Commission's application to USDA for federal farm and ranchland protection funds (FRPP), due April 5, 2005. It was agreed to include in the application a request for additional federal funds for Knight, Scituate, and Dutra, Jamestown.

Kevin Nelson update the Commission of a project with the State Conservation Committee regarding the evaluation of properties within towns for farmland protection.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenneth D. Ayars, Chief  
Division of Agriculture, RIDEM